

C. Hoyler.

In Commemoration of the Semi-Centennial of
Bruederheim and Bruederfeld Moravian Colonies
in Alberta, Canada.

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By Rev. P. R. Henkelman
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In Commemoration
of
THE SEMI-CENTENNIAL
of
BRUEDERHEIM and BRUEDERFELD
Moravian Colonies in Alberta, Canada
1895-1945





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CLEMENT HOYLER
Green Bay, Wis.

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MORRIS W. LEIBERT

*A Member of Provincial Elders'
Conference Fifty Years ago.
The Father of Moravianism
in Alberta.*

INTRODUCTORY AND GENERAL

When the writer of this brochure, was a young lad, living in the old Moravian parsonage at Watertown, Wisconsin, during the early eighties of the last century, a certain native of Volhynia, Russia, called on his father, the Rev. Jacob Hoyer, pastor at that time of the Watertown Moravian church. Said visitor, whose name was Andreas Lilge, had been sojourning in the United States for a short period, but was now about to return to his home in the old country, where he and other fellow-Volhynians had come under the influence of the Moravian church.

About a decade or so later, namely in 1893, this same Andreas Lilge, accompanied by his family and two other families, arrived one day in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, just while the Provincial Synod of that year was in session. Through the kindly offices of the Rev. J. P. Gutensohn, pastor of the Moravian congregation at Bethany, Minnesota, who was in attendance at the Synod, they found a provisional home at Bethany.

The following spring, 1894, the three families pulled up stakes and moved to Alberta, in Western Canada, where abundant rich agricultural land was still to be had, either by filing on free homesteads of 160 acres each, or by purchase on easy terms from the government or the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. In Alberta these three families were joined that same spring by a considerable number of their compatriots and fellow-Moravians, who emigrated directly from Volhynia. They hoped to form a settlement somewhere in the Edmonton District and to organize a Moravian congregation.

Eventually, however, the company was divided into two groups: Half of them decided to purchase Indian land on easy terms from the Department at Ottawa on the recently opened Papaschase Indian Reserve, a few

miles southeast of South Edmonton. These had a comparatively easy task in selecting their land. The rest preferred to avail themselves of the privilege of securing free homesteads, even though it involved many a long tramp from the immigration shed in South Edmonton to the unoccupied areas beyond Fort Saskatchewan on the Victoria Trail. The story of their hardships and privations constitutes a thrilling and even tragic chapter in the annals of New World colonization.

One bright hope sustained these hardy Moravian settlers from the beginning, and that was the belief that some day they would be able to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, free from ecclesiastical trammels and the caprice of the Czarist regime. In this firm trust they gave to their colonies names that savored of their attachment to the Brethren's Church—"Brüderheim" on the Victoria Trail and "Brüderfeld" on the Papaschase Reserve. In great confidence they turned to the denominational heads in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for recognition as Brethren of the same household of faith.

The Moravian Church in the United States did not disappoint them. Less than a year after their arrival in Canada the Provincial Elders' Conference authorized them to effect the formal organization of two full-fledged Moravian congregations—Brüderheim on May 6, 1895, and Brüderfeld on June 27, 1895. In the fall of the same year, Provincial Elders' Conference commissioned one of their number, the Rev. Morris W. Leibert, later chosen a Bishop, to pay an official visit to the Alberta congregations and to investigate the prospects and possibilities of launching a new home missionary enterprise in that territory. He spent five days in Brüderfeld and five days in Brüderheim, besides interviewing many government and railway officials and other prominent men in Winnipeg and Edmonton.

After his return to Bethlehem he submitted a favorable report to his colleagues concerning the entire project. He advocated the inclusion of the two congregations

as units of the Northern Province and the prosecution of a vigorous policy of immigration from Russia and elsewhere, with a view to building up a group of Moravian congregations in the Canadian West.

As a result of his report, it was decided to appoint a home missionary at once to take charge of the new field, and on December 28, 1895, the writer, then serving his first charge at Elizabeth, New Jersey, received the official call to become the first minister of Bruederfeld and Bruederheim. He accepted the call joyously and has always been grateful to God that he was permitted to have part in the work of this portion of the Lord's vineyard. He preached his farewell sermon in Elizabeth on January 12, 1896, and started West the next day.

Early in 1896 the Rev. M. W. Leibert published an account of his official trip to Alberta. The pamphlet was issued under the title: "Bruederfeld and Bruederheim, Moravian Settlements in Alberta, Canada," and was printed both in English and in German. It was widely distributed in the United States and in Europe and did much to promote the new undertaking, both financially and in the way of encouraging settlers to locate in Alberta. It would be good, if everybody in Bruederfeld and Bruederheim could read his pamphlet this year. Its author may well be called "The Father of Moravianism in Alberta."

Now, after the lapse of fifty years since the organization of Bruederheim and Bruederfeld, it has been thought fitting to issue another pamphlet, commemorating the golden jubilee of the two congregations. The preparation of this souvenir booklet has been entrusted to the first pastor of the two churches, who by the grace of God is still in the active ministry and has been invited to participate in the jubilee celebration, scheduled to be observed during the month of June of this present year 1945.

I must beg the indulgence of my readers for the somewhat personal and reminiscent character of the contents

of the pamphlet, but my own life was so intimately bound up with the early experiences of the Moravian colonists in Alberta that it seemed almost necessary to write in such a personal and intimate strain. It is not my intention, however, to write a history of these churches.

I have many fond recollections of Alberta. From the outset I liked my new Canadian home. Elsewhere I tell about some of the outward attractions that fascinated me from the start, but here, for a few moments, I want to dwell upon three of the deeper reasons why I hold Canada in grateful remembrance, though I moved back to my native land twenty years ago.

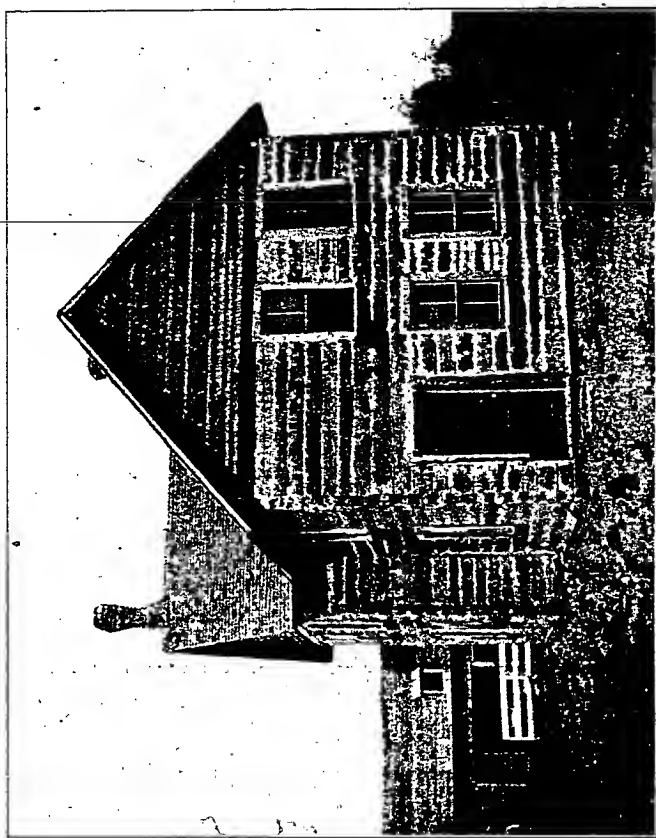
One reason why I cherish Canada is because it was the land of my adoption for a period of almost thirty years, during the greater part of which I was a naturalized citizen. I always liked the Canadian people, especially those in the West, among whom my lot was cast. I liked the Canadian officials, both Federal and Provincial. They were always courteous and obliging. Many of them were among my intimate friends. I liked the Canadian institutions—cultural, educational, moral and religious. May they always be maintained on a high level!

Again, I shall always feel a strong attachment for Canada because more than half of the years of my active ministry were spent in the Canadian District of the Moravian Church. My early associations with the pioneers will always bring back cherished memories. Some of my fondest recollections cluster around the saintly men and women that constituted my first audiences, especially in the two first congregations. I can see them yet, sitting reverently before me, in their old-world garb, on the rough planks laid on blocks of native timber. They were not perfect—those old Bruederfelders and Bruederheimers! But neither was their young minister, as no one knows better than he himself. But we understood each other from the beginning, and the passing years have only served to cement our hearts together more firmly. Many of these staunch old friends are gone. They did not live to celebrate the golden jubilee of the

congregations they helped to found at great sacrifice to themselves. In their place the second and the third and even the beginnings of the fourth generation are commemorating these jubilees today.

There is one more reason why Canada will always loom large in my reminiscences. It became for me the land where my domestic life really began to take shape. My mother, who had kept house for me in Elizabeth, New Jersey, during my three-and-one-half-year pastorate there, joined me in Bruederfeld by the end of June, 1896, as soon as the parsonage was sufficiently ready for occupancy. She soon endeared herself to the people by her sympathetic understanding of their problems and made the first Moravian parsonage in Canada a centre of far-reaching influence. In 1902, Miss Mary C. Gerdson, a school teacher from Laketown, Minnesota, which was also the writer's birthplace, joined the workers' staff at Bruederfeld as minister's wife and at once began to fill a large place in the work of the parish, both among the older members and among the young people. In 1905 our son appeared on the scene and enjoyed the spacious lawns and attractive grounds around the church and parsonage of Bruederfeld for the first four years of his life. Our daughter is a Saskatchewanite and can be mentioned only casually in a pamphlet dealing with Bruederheim and Bruederfeld in Alberta, although she, too, made many fine contacts later on in both of these congregations.

After these rather lengthy introductory and general remarks, it is time to deal specifically with the two congregations, which are celebrating their golden jubilee this year and in whose honor this souvenir booklet is gotten out.



BRUDERFELD PARSONAGE, 1896

The First Alberta Moravian Building to be Erected by Authority of the Provincial Elders' Conference. It is still in use. It has been much improved and now has a Front Porch and is surrounded by Spacious Lawns, Trees, Shrubs and Flowers. The Pruederheim Parsonage, built of Frahm in 1898, is similar in Appearance.

BRUEDERFELD

Bruederfeld is mentioned first, because, although younger by a few weeks than Bruederheim, it is geographically closer to the United States and was, therefore, the first one to be contacted both by Bishop Leibert and myself. Moreover, it had been decided by our Governing Board in Bethlehem, that Bruederfeld should become the general headquarters for the entire work and that Bruederheim should be served from there as a parish.

My first meeting with some of the Bruederfelders was interesting. Permit me to recount the story.

After spending some time in Winnipeg and Calgary, attending to preliminary matters that had a direct bearing upon the work awaiting me in my new charge, I took the train from Calgary for Edmonton at 8:00 A. M. on Monday, February 3, 1896. The distance is not quite 200 miles. It was a so-called mixed train, made up of freight cars, with a single passenger coach attached. It averaged about eighteen miles per hour and it took all day to reach its destination.

When I stepped off the train at seven o'clock in the evening at South Edmonton, then the northern terminus of the line, nobody was on hand to meet me. This really did not surprise or disappoint me in the least, because I had informed the members at Bruederfeld that I would remain in town for a few days to transact some church business. After engaging my room at the Raymond Hotel, on the western edge of the town, a hostelry recommended to me by the Rev. M. W. Leibert, I went down street once more to inquire at the station about my freight, which had been shipped from the East almost a month ago. As I sauntered along leisurely, I passed two men on the street, who were talking German. This arrested my attention, as I had not heard any German since leaving

the United States two weeks before. The men were looking up at a small, cheap-looking lodging house. One said to the other: "No; he wouldn't be in there; that would be too ordinary for him!"

After passing them, the thought came to me: "Can they possibly be looking for me?" So I turned back and asked them in German: "Are you looking for some body?" "Yes," came the rather hesitant reply, as they looked me over, "we are looking for a man." The emphasis was definitely on the last word. They were probably thinking of the appearance of Bishop Leibert, who was a big man in more ways than one. "What's his name?" I asked further. They were not quite sure of the pronunciation, but it sounded to me as if they tried to say "Hoyer." So I told them that I was their "man." Whether or not they were disappointed in my looks, I cannot say. In those days I was about as slender as on the day when I graduated from the Seminary at the age of twenty. After I had been in Alberta a year, the old immigration agent at South Edmonton, an old-country Englishman by the name of Bennett, said to me one day, as he sized me up, that he wished he could take me to the big Winnipeg Exposition as a prize exhibit, to show what one year's residence in Alberta with its salubrious and invigorating climate could do for a slim individual.

Those two men on the sidewalk of South Edmonton were Bruederfelders—the first Bruederfelders I met—Ludwig Henkelmann and Carl Mauer. They had gotten to town too late for the train, and although they knew that I would not be going out to Brnederfeld that night, they were evidently curious to know what their new minister might look like. There were more Bruederfelders, they told me, on the other side of the street. These, too, they said, were looking for the new minister. I found them in the store of a merchant, who was described to me as "the German Swede." The man was a genuine Swede all right, but he could talk a little broken German and so he had captured some of the trade of our German-speaking Moravian settlers. In the typical frontier gro-

every store of this "German Swede" we all stood and chatted awhile, until I finally returned to my hotel, and my four or five Bruederfelders drove back to their home in the country. What they talked about on their way home is not on record.

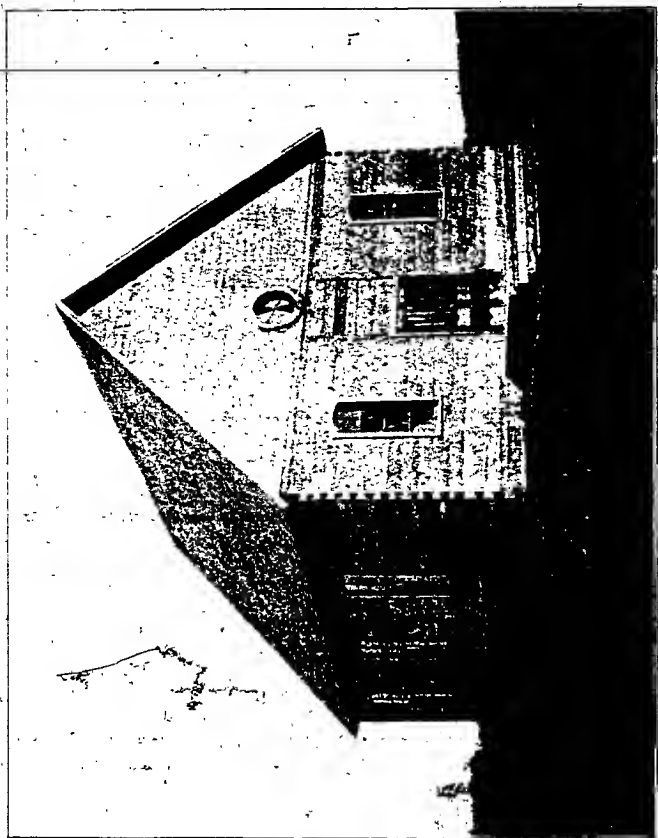
The following days were spent in interviewing government officials, merchants, newspaper men, lumber dealers,



CLEMENT HOYLER
First Resident Pastor in Bruederfeld
 1896 - 1909

clergymen and others, both in Edmonton and in South Edmonton.

On Thursday afternoon, February 6, Julius Riemer came to town with his bobsled to take me and my baggage out to Bruederfeld. He was accompanied by Ludwig Henkelmann to identify me. On that date I set eyes for the first time on one of the Canadian Moravian settle-



BRUEDERFELD CHURCH

ments that had been entrusted to my pastoral care. I was taken to the Riemer home, where a room had been set apart for my use as my temporary abode. I was made very comfortable and felt at home at once. Their house was a comparatively pretentious one, far more substantial than the brush shelter, under which the family, including a new-born babe, had taken refuge during the first weeks after they located on their land. Both my host and my hostess of that first winter have gone to their reward; the former during one of my first years, the latter only a few years ago.

On Sunday, February 9, 1896, I preached my introductory sermon in the large and commodious house of Andreas Stolz, one of God's noblemen, then a man of about sixty. Seventy people were crowded into the middle room of the long loghouse. The people sat on rude benches, kept between Sundays out in the yard. The women wore headshaws something like those which the girls affect in our cities today, only they were prettier, more becoming, more colorful and of better quality than what the present generation wears.

My text that Sunday was taken from Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." These words seem almost prophetic in the light of later events. The people eagerly drank in the message.

There was a little disturbance during the service, but no one seemed to pay any attention to it. Right next to the middle room, where we met, there was a third unfinished room at the western end of the long log building, connected with our meeting place by a door that probably did not fit any too well. This large western room was being used as the temporary quarters for the farmer's chickens. So it happened that while I was preaching sundry hens noisily announced that they had laid some eggs—eggs for which the good housewife probably got eight or ten cents a dozen in trade at the store of "the German Swede" in town.

At the close of the service we had a general handshake all around, and great good fellowship and Chris-

tian love prevailed. The men nearly all looked alike to me with their full old-country beards. The women were equally indistinguishable with their faces partly hidden by their interesting headdress.

In the afternoon a second service, almost as large, was held. The following Sunday a Sunday School was organized and a weekly prayer meeting inaugurated during the week following. By the end of February the work was in full swing. Even a choir was organized the following month. The first invitation to attend a rehearsal brought out a large motley crowd. I let them all 'belong'. No formal audition was conducted. They automatically dropped into their proper place. There were some mighty fine voices in the aggregation.

Such was my introduction to our home missionary work in Western Canada. For thirty years it was my privilege to labor in that field. These years were marked by many precious experiences. There were some disappointments, but they were more than offset by numerous encouragements.

One of the first tasks that needed to be undertaken was the assembling of the building material for two churches and a parsonage, all of which were to be constructed of logs. The remaining winter months had to be utilized for hauling the logs out of the forests. The Dominion Land Office in Edmonton furnished permits for the cutting of timber on unoccupied government land. The logs for the Bruederfeld buildings were gotten mostly from the Cooking Lake region; those for the Bruederheim church were found mainly in the heavy forests North of the Victoria trail.

In Bruederfeld it was decided to speed up the erection of a parsonage first and to leave the finishing of the church to a later period. In Bruederheim, on the other hand, the building of the church was given priority. After my mother's arrival, we had a pleasant house warming, dedicating the parsonage with simple ceremonies and serving refreshments at the close.

Our people always were fond of festival occasions. I distinctly remember some of those that were observed during my ~~first~~ year in the great hay and grain barn of Andreas Stolz, where we met upon the home-made concrete threshing floor during the warm summer months of 1896, after it had gotten too hot and stuffy in the middle room of the house. Here in that cool barn, where, during the week, the threshing flails were plied upon the hard concrete floor, where the breezes could freely blow through the big wide-open doors and the entire place was filled with the fragrance of sweet-scented hay, we observed the first anniversary of Bruederfeld, celebrated the first Moravian lovefeast in Alberta, confirmed the first class of young people and conducted a blessed communion service.

My first Christmas celebration in Bruederfeld was held in what had been the henery at the west end of the Stolz house, where the chickens used to cackle during our services in the middle room. Now it had been converted into a neat-looking chapel, with pulpit and platform-and-pedal-bass-organ. Here in this erstwhile chicken-house, on December 25, 1896, about 125 men, women and children were crowded together for an elaborate Christmas program. Wonderful gifts had been received from Lake Mills, Wisconsin, which brought unspeakable delight to our unspoiled children.

By the following summer the church was finished, and on June 27, 1897, the solemn dedication could take place. A record crowd from near and far assembled to set the plain log building apart for the service of the Lord. One of our leading members, good-natured John Job, had said beforehand: "I hope so many people will come that I will have to stand during the entire service." His wish was fulfilled. It was a big day, too, when, after the tower had been added and a bell installed in the belfry, both were dedicated with suitable ceremonies.

Great Moravian historical events were also fittingly commemorated, as, for example, the 175th anniversary of the commencement of Moravian Missions on August

21, 1907. The entire story of our mission enterprise was recounted that day in poetical form, by about half a dozen boys, each one of whom recited a poem of from fifty to seventy-five stanzas without once being prompted. One of these boys became a missionary himself—none other than Ferdinand Drebert. Several others afterwards entered the ministry at home. During that same year, namely on March 1, 1907, we commemorated the founding of the Ancient Unitas Fratrum 450 years ago. Besides three Moravian ministers, the Rev. D. G. McQueen, D.D., of the Presbyterian Church, spoke at the two crowded services.

Of local congregational anniversaries, those of 1905 and 1935 respectively will go down in Bruederfeld's history as events of outstanding magnitude. The former came in the midst of the great revival of that year; that of 1935 was marked by an attendance of nearly one thousand at the afternoon service alone, necessitating the installation of loud speakers on the church lawn.

Inspiring mission festivals, enthusiastic youth conventions, elaborate Christmas and Easter programs characterized the entire period covered by these past fifty years. Special music by choirs of from fifteen to fifty voices, as well as band and orchestra music, embellished these festival occasions.

An event of more than local importance was the holding, in Bruederfeld, of the first District Synod of the newly created Fifth or Canadian District of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church in America, which was convened in 1904 and was presided over by Bishop J. Mortimer Levering, of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

At various times during these fifty years the Lord granted seasons of rich refreshing. Numerous souls were "begotten again unto a lively hope." Many of these have gone to be with the Lord. It will be joy unspeakable to meet them again around the throne of God. Several of the Lord's servants from elsewhere helped during these times of ingathering, not only the various

Canadian ministers, but men from the United States imbued with the spirit of evangelism—the Rev. Henry Richter, the Rev. Edward F. Helmich and the Rev. John Greenfield.

Truly, Bruederfeld is rich in historic lore. Many well-known men have spoken within the walls of the old log church, now beautified inside and outside to such a degree that no one would suspect its simple rustic inner construction. Not only such Moravian Church leaders as Bishop Leibert, Bishop Mueller and Bishop Levering, but representatives of other bodies—Canon William Newton, author of "Twenty Years on the Saskatchewan," an Anglican, and Dr. D. G. McQueen, the veteran Presbyterian churchman, whose name is a household word in all the Canadian West.

Today, as we look back over the first fifty years of the history of Bruederfeld, we can only exclaim: "What hath God wrought!" "Ebenezer—hitherto hath the Lord helped us." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

The first statistics published of this congregation, namely those for December 31, 1895, give the following figures: Communicants, 45; Non-Communicants, 20; Children, 52; Total, 117. For quite some years Bruederfeld was the larger of the two pioneer congregations. Eventually, about the year 1916, it was outstripped by Bruederheim. This never created any ill-feeling. Each rejoiced over the success and prosperity of the other. The present membership is as follows: Communicants, 146; Non-Communicants, 7; Children, 30; Total, 183.

For Bruederfeld this much may be said: the congregation became the mother of several other churches. It contributed several members to Heimtal, which was the third Canadian congregation to be organized, the event taking place in July, 1896. It largely supplied the membership of Bruce, which existed as a separate congregation for several years. It furnished practically all the charter members of the New Sarepta colony, which is now

one of the flourishing churches in the Canadian District and the third to become self-supporting. Hobbema is likewise largely composed of ex-Bruederfelders. Edmonton, too, formerly known as Strathcona congregation, has drawn heavily on the Bruederfeld membership. It is, therefore, not at all to the discredit of Bruederfeld that its communicant membership never rose much above the 200 mark, and its highest total only once exceeded 350. Moreover, its circumscribed geographical field precludes its greater expansion, as all the adjacent territory is occupied by other churches. Bruederfeld was the first of the Canadian Moravian congregations to attain self-support.

Bruederfeld has had the following pastorates:

- Clement Hoyer, 1896 to 1909 (For about two years of this period W. N. Schwarze was co-pastor)
- Emil Suemper, 1910 to 1919
- Julius Mewaldt, 1919 to 1922
- John Fliegel, 1923 to 1928
- Robert Kreitlow, 1928 to 1936
- Samuel Wedman, 1936 to 1941
- Edward Wilde, 1941 to 1943
- William F. Kroening, 1944 to

The first child to be born in the Bruederfeld parsonage was Cyril N. Hoyer, now connected with the research laboratories of the Radio Corporation of America in Princeton, New Jersey. The second one was Clement E. Suemper, present pastor of the East Side Moravian Church, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

During these fifty years the following official acts were performed (up to the time of the publication of this pamphlet): Infant Baptisms, 541; Adult Baptisms, 4; Confirmations, 411; Marriages, 131; Funerals, 217.

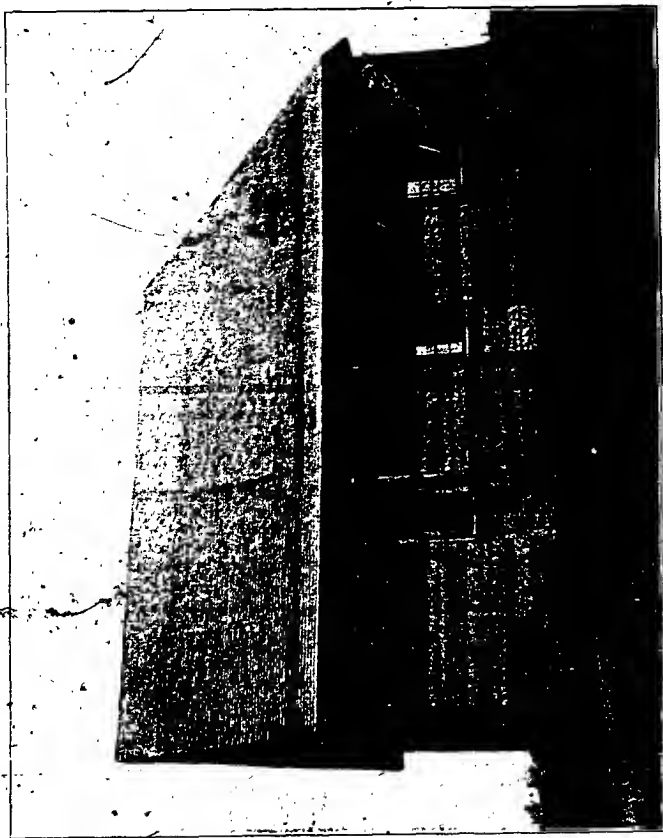
The membership has raised the following amounts: For local expenses, \$65,517.79; for Provincial Assessment, \$5,460.65; for Moravian Benevolences, \$30,943.71. From the Board of Church Extension Bruederfeld has

received a total of \$3,200.67. Its church property at present is conservatively valued at \$8,300.

As a home missionary enterprise, Bruederfeld has been a sound investment. It has repaid to the Church at large more than eleven times as much as it has received; or, including its property which it has deeded to the Moravian Church, about fourteen times the amount the Church spent on the work.

Bruederfeld has furnished five ministers, one minister's wife, and three missionaries, besides two present candidates for the ministry.

Only eternity will reveal the full fruitage of souls won for Christ through the work of this congregation during the half-century just closed. To God be all praise and glory for that which has been accomplished!



Bruderheim Church at it Appeared at the Time of its Dedication in 1897.

BRUEDERHEIM

Bruederheim was organized about seven weeks earlier than Bruederfeld, namely on May 6, 1895. Much of the land in that section was more heavily timbered than at Bruederfeld on the Papaschase Reserve. Many of the humble log cabins, as I recall them during my early visits, were tucked away in deep woods. Some were exceedingly primitive—sod roofs, earth floors, home-made tables, stools and bedsteads, doorways too low to pass through them in an erect posture, the doors themselves made of rough boards hung on wooden hinges, without locks, equipped with simple wooden latches. But a quiet atmosphere of hospitality and contentment prevailed within.

I shall never forget my first trip to Bruederheim. It was a cold, blustery day, that eleventh of February, 1896. Clad in a heavy coon coat, wearing a beaver cap on my head and a pair of Dolge felt shoes on my feet, I was well equipped for that fifty-mile drive to my outstation. The driver and owner of the team was Philip Busenius, one of the few original pioneers still living. My fellow-passenger was Ludwig Henkelmann, of blessed memory. We started out from Bruederfeld in great good spirits. I was all a-thrill. It was going to be the longest sleighride I had ever had. I was to see new country and to visit another Moravian congregation in Canada.

All went well as far as South Edmonton. From there we took a winding trail down the long hill toward the Saskatchewan River, which we were to cross on the solid ice. At one point, where the grade was quite steep, the big bobsled, owing to the defective harness and the poorly functioning neckyoke, slid into the heels of the horses, one of which was wild and became unmanageable. To make matters worse, the bolt that held the double-tree in place became dislodged, and the heavy double-tree began to strike against the heels of the now unruly

horses. A genuine runaway seemed in the making. I could not do anything to stop the horses, and so I followed the natural human instinct for selfpreservation and decided to tumble out of the left side of the box into the soft, deep snow into which the sled had careened. My companion, Ludwig Henkelmann, followed my example on his side of the sleigh, but found no soft snow there and injured his leg when he struck the hard road. The driver was dragged out of the box when his horses became detached from the sleigh, but he continued hanging frantically to the reins. Fortunately the team became entangled in the heavy underbrush beside the road and came to a standstill. Eventually we got going again, crossed the ice and climbed the hill to the North side up into the streets of Edmonton.

It was eleven o'clock before we got started from Edmonton, heading for Fort Saskatchewan. It was bitter cold. More than once we got out and walked behind the sled, stamping our feet and swinging our arms around our bodies to keep ourselves a bit warm. Arriving at Fort Saskatchewan at 2:15 P. M., we went to the hotel had some lunch, fed the horses and then proceeded on the last leg of the journey out over the historic Victoria Trail. The wind grew stronger and the temperature kept dropping until it must have been considerably below zero. But at last, about 6:00 P. M., we arrived at the log shack of one of the pioneer Bruederheimers, where we had supper, consisting of boiled eggs, bread and tea. We stopped with this family of four for the night.

To me their shack was exceedingly interesting, because it was so typical of the first temporary makeshift dwellings put up by the first-settlers. The logs were thin, because when the homesteader put up his first humble hut he had not yet acquired any oxen or horses. So he and his grown-up son had to carry the tree-trunks out of the forest on their own shoulders. The logs were none too straight and had not been hewn any too well, so the frigid wind could blow at will through the crevices. The rough floor boards were fastened to their stringers by

means of wooden pins. There was but a single room, though four upright posts across the middle of the room ostensibly divided the interior into two parts. These posts served as a convenient means of access for the family cats to scamper up to the low loft under the roof, where it probably was warmer than on the drafty floor. A shivering dog, too, watched his opportunity to dash through the door and find shelter inside, though fre-



WILLIAM N. SCHWARZE
First Resident Pastor in Bruederheim
 1898 - 1890

quently ejected. In one corner of the big room there was a chicken-coop, the occupants of which could strut about at will in the room during the day.

Sleeping quarters were rather cramped in this abode with three unexpected lodgers pouncing upon the right-

ful owners after dark. I had a good bed and slept rather well after my fifty-mile drive, breathing fresh ozone all day. I think some members of the family were up all night, because somebody seemed to be replenishing the fire throughout the passing hours. My companions told me the next morning that they had gotten up several times during the night to warm their feet at the red-hot stove.

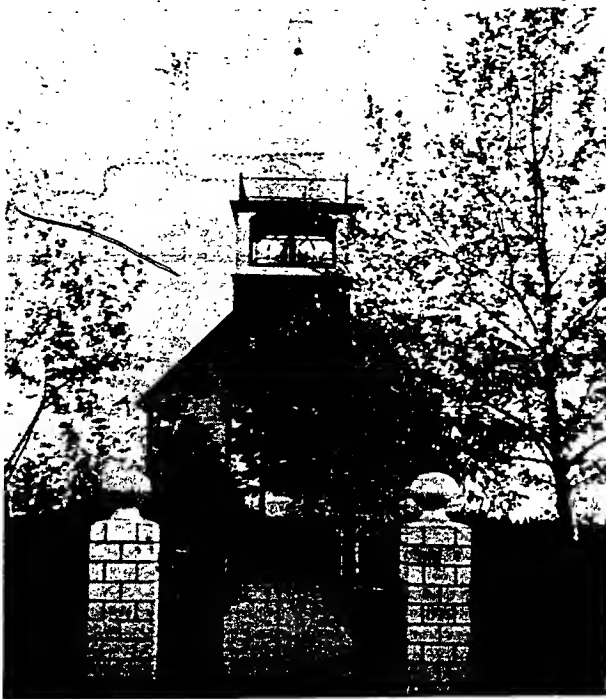
I am giving these little glimpses of early days to let the present generation, living in their beautiful, comfortable homes in Bruederheim and Bruederfeld, know that their grandfathers endured these privations so that they could bequeathe better things to their children and children's children.

Day dawned at last, and I took a little stroll around the premises. I found the place set in the midst of genuine wilds, and I thought to myself: "What daring hope and what courageous faith to establish one's self in such a wilderness!" But today that entire region is a rich agricultural section.

During this my first visit in Bruederheim I did not conduct any service. That came on a Sunday a little later. The Bruederheim services were held in the roomy house of Wilhelm Schultz, a quiet brother of patriarchal appearance. The congregation was given, as nearly as possible, the same consideration as the one on "the Reserve." In the absence of the pastor, the meetings were conducted by Andreas Lilge, who had been licensed to preach.

In August, 1896, a second minister was called to work in Alberta in the person of the Rev. W. N. Schwarze, a recent graduate of the Seminary. After that, the two men shared the entire work on equal terms, each taking his turn at Bruederfeld, at Bruederheim, at Heimtal, where a congregation was formally organized July 28, 1896, and at a number of preaching places connected with the three congregations.

Eventually the people of Bruederheim decided to erect a log shack near their church, so that the ministers would have quarters of their own, where they could eat and sleep and study, without becoming a burden to the settlers during their early lack of accommodations. This was a very happy arrangement. The ministers enjoyed the privacy of their own quarters while at Bruederheim. Members could come and interview them on personal matters without inconveniencing anybody. The men prepared many of their own meals in this shack, except when they visited the members and were invited to enjoy



BRUEDERHEIM CHURCH TODAY

The Original Log Building, but Greatly Improved and Beautified, Inside and Outside, Including Basement.

their hospitality. The people furnished meat, bread, milk, butter, with occasional cakes and "pommelchen," a species of cookies, while some of the groceries were brought along from town. After his marriage in 1898, the Rev. W. N. Schwarze was appointed resident pastor of Bruederheim, and a regular parsonage was built to replace the log shack.

Interesting experiences were made in that log shack. The roof consisted of a thick layer of sod laid upon poles. During wet seasons a rich crop of grass, weeds and volunteer grain grew on the roof. After a protracted dry spell the roots and fibers of the sod, through which a simple piece of stove pipe had been thrust as a substitute for a chimney, became something of a fire hazard. One cold fall day, when a hot fire was blazing in the old-fashioned box stove, while I was absorbed in my preparation for Sunday, I became aware of a pungent odor that was filling the room. I soon realized that my sod roof had caught fire from the hot stove pipe. How I managed to clamber up that log cabin with my pail of water, which fortunately was well-filled at the time, I cannot remember, but I must have been more nimble then than I am now. Anyway I succeeded in extinguishing the fire, thus averting what might have been a real misfortune.

The following spring, which was absolutely rainless until about the twentieth of June, the roof again became so dry that sand and dust fell down into the interior through the closely laid roof poles. But during the night from June 20 to 21, if I remember the exact dates correctly, torrential rains began to fall, and in the middle of the night water began to pour upon my bunk and to flood the floor. I made a hasty exit and with my bedding wrapped in a roll fled to the near-by church. That morning I went breakfastless. In the course of the forenoon the rain stopped and I made some calls in the settlement. I found everybody happy, for although they all had made the same experiences as I had made, they all thanked God for the welcome rain, which saved their crops from utter loss.

About thirty years ago I collected authentic stories related to me by some of the old-timers regarding their early experiences. These stories, many of which come from Bruederheimers, are worthy of preservation. Indeed, they are to be deposited some day in the Provincial Archives for the possible use of some future historian.

Some of the stories deal with the abundance of rabbits the first winter and how they were a veritable godsend for



JACOB REDBERGER

Present Pastor of Bruederheim; since 1937

the people, who otherwise would have suffered dire want. Here is a little anecdote in lighter vein: A certain father in Bruederheim overheard his daughters discuss styles one evening in the adjoining bedroom. So he said to them: "You girls, when you go to bed nowadays, wonder how your new dresses are going to be made. We old folks, on the other hand, in the olden days, used to

wonder how many rabbits there would be in the pits next morning.

Some of the first weddings I attended at Bruederheim were interesting occasions. I think it was the very first one at which I officiated in this congregation in the late summer of 1896 that was unique in my entire ministry, because one of the chief viands at the feast which followed the ceremony was a juicy and tender joint cut from the carcass of a bear cub, at the killing of which, in a nearby woods, I had been present a day or two before.

Another interesting wedding was that of two young people from the congregation, who started out in life in very modest circumstances. The chief item in their larder consisted of eighty pounds of flour, which lasted them from May till Christmas. Their house furnishings were simple and were mostly home made. Of dishes they had only a few and needed only what they had. Their kitchen utensils were limited to a single pot. In this pot they cooked their potatoes, stewed their rabbits and boiled their tea. A single pot, and that was one which the bride borrowed from her mother! But the Lord blessed that couple and many others of Bruederheim. Nor did the people forget the Lord and his work. That is why it sometimes happened that a fifty dollar bill and once even a hundred dollar bill was found in the mission festival collection. One year the mission festival offering exceeded \$1,900.00.

Bruederheim, like its sister congregation on "The Reserve," was fond of festivals. Its church was formally opened at Christmas, 1896. The fortieth anniversary of the congregation was a memorable event. A splendid choir of about fifty voices, supported in some of the anthems by a fine orchestra, rendered some of the productions of great masters. That day the congregation fed over a thousand people at noon and nearly as many in the evening free of charge. The religious services of that day lasted in the aggregate nearly eight hours! There were many other great gatherings in the course of the years—young people's conventions, with sessions

both in the church and in the near-by grove; celebrations of the Married People's Festival after the pattern of the observance in Volhynia; meetings of the District Synod; evangelistic campaigns; and just the ordinary week-by-week large Sunday audiences, for the Bruderheimers were always great church-goers. May they always continue to have that distinction!

In the early years, when I still helped to serve Bruderheim along with the other congregations, I always



BRUEDERFELD CHURCH TODAY

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liked to visit this northernmost outpost of our Province. Among its members were some of the finest Canadian Moravians. The Old Guard is almost gone. I cherish the memory of our delightful Christian fellowship here on earth. We hope to meet again in the Church above.

The beginnings of the congregation were small, even smaller than in its younger sister. The first statistics, those of December 31, 1895, recorded 44 Communicants, 16 Non-Communicants, 51 Children, a Total of 111.

Since 1916 it has been the largest congregation in the Canadian District. Its present membership is as follows: Communicants, 310; Non-Communicants, 38; Children, 101; Total, 449. There were always many children in Bruederheim. At one period there were just about as many children as communicants. One year, when the annual report was sent to the denominational headquarters, the compiler of the statistics thought there must have been a mistake, but the pastor of Bruederheim assured him that the Children's column had not been padded. Not long after that the brother from the East visited the Alberta churches and when the date of his visit in Bruederheim was set, the pastor of the congregation told his people that on that Sunday they should bring every last one of their children to church, as the visiting brother was exceedingly fond of children (which was quite literally true) and that he would be very happy to see all their children. The parents cooperated just about 100% and the visiting brother never again questioned the Bruederheim statistics.

During these past fifty years Bruederheim has given many of its members to other congregations, notably to Edmonton and to Vancouver. Its achievements under God have been noteworthy. With the Psalmist of old, Bruederheim can say: "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Psalm 126:3.

The following ministers have served the congregation thus far:

Clement Hoyler, 1896 to 1898 (During the latter part of this period, William N. Schwarze was co-pastor)

W. N. Schwarze, 1898 to 1900

W. C. Schattschneider, 1900-1904

C. A. Albrecht, 1904 to 1912

C. A. Gutensohn, 1912 to 1926

S. Wedman, 1926 to 1932

F. Anhorn, 1932 to 1933

F. Wolff, 1933 to 1936

W. C. Schattschneider, 1936 to 1937

J. Redberger, 1937 to

The first child to be born in the Bruederheim parsonage was Allen W. Schattschneider, present pastor of the Moravian Church at Riverside, New Jersey. The second one was C. Earl Albrecht, M. D., now connected with the medical service of the U. S. Army at Anchorage, Alaska.

During these fifty years the following official acts were performed (up to the time of the publication of this



WILLIAM F. KROENING

-Present Pastor of Bruederfeld; since 1944

pamphlet): Infant Baptisms, 735; Adult Baptisms, 8; Confirmations, 526; Marriages, 140; Funerals, 216.

Money raised by the membership for local expenses, \$72,970; for Moravian Benevolences, \$36,195; for Provincial Assesment, \$6,080; Total, \$115,245. During the

time that Bruederheim was a home mission, it received from the Board of Church Extension the sum of \$5,485. The Sunday School contributed \$1,032 to Moravian missionary causes, besides raising \$3,575 for its own expenses. The present value of its church property (belonging to the denomination at large) is about \$16,000. As a home mission enterprise, Bruederheim has paid good dividends. It has returned to the Church at large nearly seven times as much as the Church gave to Bruederheim, and if we include the value of the real estate, the return would be nine-and-one-half times the help received.

Bruederheim has produced four ministers of the Gospel, one minister's wife, two missionaries, two missionaries' wives and, at the time of writing, two further candidates for the ministry. The congregation has been used of God for the building of the Kingdom of Christ in its own community and in the worldwide mission work of the Moravian Church to a degree given to but few Moravian congregations anywhere. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Rev. 3:11.

LOOKING AHEAD

Bruederheim and Bruederfeld today are reviewing the past—not boastfully, but gratefully; not self-complacently, but humbly. However, they should not stop with contemplation of the past, but should now turn their eyes to the future with a resolute, consecrated forward-look. Let the past be an incentive to greater effort in the days ahead. God, who has used these congregations during the past fifty years for His glory and honor, can use them even more mightily in the years to come. God works through human instruments. Through a yielded and fully-surrendered membership He can accomplish wonders. The task that lies ahead rests on the generation that has come on the scene. There are many young people in these congregations, as there are throughout the Canadian District.

Let me address my closing words to the present and the coming generation of young people, to the boys and girls of today and tomorrow. A rich heritage has been left to you by the fathers, the founders of these and our other churches. See to it, that you maintain this legacy inviolate; that you keep faith with those, who have gone before, in their loyalty to Christ and to the Church which they built on Christ as the Chief Cornerstone; that you uphold the truth as it is in Jesus; that you faithfully pray for the constant demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit, working in the hearts of young and old alike. If this Spirit animates you today and will fill those who will come after you, even greater things can be expected of God than what these past fifty years have witnessed.

As one of your fellow workers of other days, I sincerely wish you all the abounding blessing of our Lord, as you meet to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Bruederheim and Bruederfeld, and I pray that He may use you for ever larger service as you enter upon a further period in the history of your congregations—ever watching and waiting for our Lord's return.

Sincerely yours,

Clement Hoyer

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

It may interest some of my readers to know what some of the outward attractions of Alberta were that fascinated me from the very beginning. They all had to do with the handiwork of God.

It was winter when I arrived in Canada. I shall never forget the thrill I felt when I caught my first glimpse of the Rocky Mountains, glistening like purest white marble in the dazzling morning sun of a crisp January day against the brilliant azure blue of the western sky.

In the vicinity of my first Canadian home in the Edmonton District there was still a lot of woodland in those days, and in many places the forests were interspersed with stately evergreens. Bruederfeld is situated on the western edge of a somewhat broken terrain known as the Beaver Hills, and Bruederheim is located on the northern fringe of the same area. The landscape at both places was, therefore, sufficiently varied to be attractive. Moreover, at that time the country was still unspoiled by the too intensive cultivation of the land, which later stripped it of its forests to a large extent, drained many of its ponds and smaller lakes, plowed up its flower-bedecked openings and, to my way of thinking, robbed it of much of its pristine beauty.

The denizens of the forests and the meadows afforded opportunity for interesting studies in the realm of natural history. Bird life, even in winter, was varied and animated, including, among other species, the Ruffed Grouse, the Pinnated Grouse, some three or four species of Owl, the Canada Jay, the Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, the Snow-Bunting and the Long-tailed Chickadee. Most of these winter birds were practically new to me, coming as I did from the Atlantic seaboard. The Coyote and the Lynx, the Muskrat and the Variable Hare, the Mink and the Otter—these and other animals, big and

little, were encountered everywhere on my first long winter drives.

The starry heavens caught my eye at once. They were marvelous, incomparably more beautiful than the heavy, misty, smoke-and-grime-laden skies of the metropolitan area of New York. I arrived in Alberta when the Northern Lights were at their best. I had never seen such exquisite displays. Later I was appointed one of the Dominion observers to furnish the Meteorological Bureau in Toronto with descriptions, measurements, drawings and other data concerning the Aurora Borealis, at a time when the Bureau was making a study of this beautiful phenomenon for the benefit of the scientific world. A lecture on Northern Lights, which grew out of these studies, was later delivered scores of times in Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota and other states.

Nor were the winter *days* in Canada devoid of interesting meteorological phenomena. On many of the bright, crisp days, when traveling between Branderfeld and Branderheim, brilliant visions appeared in connection with the sun: parhelia or mock suns, solar halo systems of various and, at times, complex patterns, with contact arches of bright prismatic colors, overhead and lateral streamers running out from the sun and occasionally encircling the entire heavens at a uniform elevation above the horizon. All of these glories of the heavens, whether by day or by night, helped to make the long drives behind musical sleighbells wondrously delightful, except when facing a biting wind at sub-zero temperatures, or breaking trail over a heavily drifted road.

With the advent of spring all nature took on an added charm. Myriads of waterfowl of every description winged their way northward. Every slough and pond and lake became the home of breeding ducks and the feeding ground of numerous shorebirds. The larger bodies of water teemed with many kinds of larger water birds, including geese of several kinds, the White Pelican, the Loon and the Grebes.

On land, four different species of Gopher began to emerge from their underground winter-quarters, scampering about in every direction when my buggy was heard rumbling over the trail. Wild flowers in great profusion and of almost endless variety made their appearance to greet the newcomer and to extend their welcome to an admirer of the Canadian flora. I still possess my collection of native Alberta flowers, mounted and classified in accordance with the methods followed by herbariums—over three hundred different kinds, gathered within a radius of a few miles of my first Canadian home.

Some flowers occurred in such great abundance that they added a special touch of color to the ever-changing landscape. I recall the broad belts of rose-purple Shooting-Stars (*Dodecatheon Meadia*), fringing the meadows that surrounded shallow ponds. Edging some of these ponds or covering the stagnant water of roadside ditches, masses of White Water-Crowfoot (*Ranunculus aquatilis*) produced the effect, at a distance, of miniature snow-banks. In many places the roads were lined with an endless array of the aromatic Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*, var. *mollis*), conspicuous for size and purple in color, its eastern relative being known as Oswego Tea. The Orange-Red Lily (*Lilium Philadelphicum*), a showy flower far too pretty to plow under, as our pioneer settlers had to do when breaking the virgin soil for their first fields, at one time occurred in such quantities in and near the Brueckerfeld Cemetery as to tinge the area with a brilliant red. Out near Bruce, where we used to have a congregation and where our son taught his first Canadian school, one of Alberta's earliest spring flowers, the Crocus Anemone (*Anemone patens*, var. *Nuttalliana*), sometimes called the Pasque or Easter Flower, tinted vast areas in April with a beautiful purplish hue. Acres upon acres of the Great Willow-Herb (*Epilobium angustifolium*) occurred on burnt-over lands everywhere in late summer and early fall. Macoun, the Canadian botanist, calls it "a fine tall beautiful species," and says that it occurs in "New-

foundland, Labrador, and Nova Scotia, west to the Pacific and north to the mouth of the Mackenzie, west to Alaska and east to Greenland. One year, when visiting a nature-lover near Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, he told me that he had just discovered a rare flower in a secluded part of the Lehigh Mountains, which he was going to dig up and transplant into his wild-flower garden at his beautiful rustic home. He wondered whether I might be able to identify it for him. After quite a trudge we reached the lonely spot and there I found a single specimen of the Great Willow-Herb. A little regretfully—for I did not like to hurt his feelings—I told him that where I came from (Alberta) we had millions of them.

But my super-extra-special favorite among the wild flowers of Alberta was the delicate, lilac-hued Bird's Eye Primrose (*Primula farinosa*), which was not overly common anywhere, but had a wide distribution in the Canadian West. The specimens in my collection come from the adjoining farm of the early pioneer, Friedrich Hoppe, just east of the Bruederfeld church. Alas, the Bird's Eye Primrose is now, I believe, practically extinct in all of my old haunts.

I cannot forbear mentioning a special thrill when, one day near the home of Jacob Seutter in the South-eastern part of the Bruederfeld settlement, I spied for the first time a modest but beautiful little flower, smiling at me from the ditch beside the road. My delight was enhanced immeasurably, when, upon my return home, I identified it with the help of my books as a specimen of *Chrysosplenium Americanum*, Golden Saxifrage, and found that it had first been described and so euphoni-ously named by the famous Moravian botanist, Lewis David von Schweinitz, once a Moravian minister in Salem, North Carolina, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

As spring and summer wore on during my first season, I took note of the gay moths and butterflies, as well as insects of other orders. Eventually, under the encouragement of the government, I began to make col-

lections in entomology, collections which I am still using for illustrative purposes in giving Bible talks before all manner of groups, including service clubs and ministerial associations, as well as high school students and young people's conferences, for the one purpose of showing how the same divine truths are taught by the life history of God's most humble creatures, as are revealed in His inspired Word.

In this realm, too, I made some interesting finds, as, for example, a showy moth and an unusual butterfly, both with a rather circumscribed distribution and both including Brunederfeld in their habitat.

In self-defense permit me to say in conclusion that I tried never to let these earthly hobbies interfere with my pastoral duties. On the contrary, I believe they enriched my spiritual ministry, served as an intellectual stimulus, brought mental relaxation, oftentimes afforded an easy approach to people and ultimately, I feel sure, redounded to God's glory. They are of secondary importance in my recollections of the years spent in the service of the Lord in Canada.

The Author.



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